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News Sheet of the American Branch of the Anglican Society

FEBRUARY, 1942

THE ANNUAL MEETING.

The Annual Meeting was held in Trinity Chapel Parish House, New York, on January 14 at 5:30 P. M. The Vice-President called the meeting to order and presided in the absence of the President. The various reports were received, the Treasurer reporting a balance of $520.33. Suggestions were made that the society issue pamphlets on the Faith and Practice of the Church to show that the Society had other than liturgical interests, but as various excellent pamphlets were now in circulation on these matters it was felt that the best method might be to issue lists recommending dependable leaflets, pamphlets and books.

There was an excellent discussion led by Canon Daniels on proper methods in chanting and the use of Anglican chants, well rendered, was recommended.

The Vice-President presented the resignation of the Rt. Rev. Dr. G. Ashton Oldham, Bishop of Albany, due to pressure of other work which forbade responsibility for the leadership of the Society. It was voted that he become Honorary President of the Society and a grateful minute to his services to the Society (he has been President from the time the Society began in 1932.) was placed on record. The Vice-President also resigned and the Elections were made as follows:

President, the Rev. Edward R. Welles, Rector of Christ Church, Alexandria, Va.

Vice-President, the Rev. Dr. J. Wilson Sutton, Vicar of Trinity Chapel, New York.

Secretary, the Rev. Francis F. E. Blake, St. Mark's Parish, Philadelphia, Pa.

Treasurer, Mr. Richard A. Zerega.

The Rev. Charles E. Hill was elected Editor of the News Sheet.

A dinner was served to the members in the Parish House and after dinner an excellent paper on "Why Not Try the Prayer Book Use?" was read by the Rev. Francis Blake. The Society voted to publish this.

The Editor of the News Sheet ventures to extend congratulations to the new President and Vice-President, knowing that he voices the sentiments of the members of the Society. May the coming years show greatly extended interest in the work of the Society, for there is a much-needed influence to be increased throughout the Episcopal Church, emphasizing the fundamental teachings of the Christian Religion, maintaining the Catholic character of the Church, showing our bounden duty to conduct the Prayer Book services according to Prayer Book standards, so much more edifying and beautiful than when conducted according to Roman or Sectarian or merely individualistic whims.

A reprint of an article now out of print, published some years ago:

A LETTER

My dear Jack:

Your letter of inquiry is very interesting and raises questions that a good many of your brethren also ask.

Let me say at once that I sympathize with your desire to have your Church a place of quiet and reverence where things are done "decently and in order," where, however, the main emphasis is not on ceremonial but on the much more important matters of Christian Faith and Practice. You say that too many of the so-called "ritualistic" Churches seem to place so little emphasis on the main things our religion teaches, a criticism which seems to me just. But it is true that a Church properly cared for and services rendered in reverent and intelligent ways do help people to know God better and to love Him and serve Him more earnestly.

In the Episcopal Church we are heirs of a great tradition. The Book of Common Prayer is our priceless possession. I like these words from the Introduction to "A Short Handbook of Public Worship:"

"In the glory of its language it (the Prayer Book) stands alone; in its conciseness and richness, its wisdom and tolerance, it has no equal; in the 'shape' of its services, the surge of their movement, and the exquisite cadence of their phrases, it is universally recognized as one of the most precious possessions of the English-speaking peoples.

"To have this ordered magnificence in our hands for continual use is our great privilege; and it would seem impossible to make our services either dull or tawdry with guidance so quickening and so virile."

Why not try in your Church to provide the Prayer Book atmosphere? It is distinctive and makes a favorable impression on all kinds of people while so often the copying of Roman Catholic ways irritates.

I jot down a few things that help very much to create the Prayer Book atmosphere.

1. For Morning and Evening Prayer, the Litany, and for sermons wear a long and full surplice (never trimmed with any kind of lace) with black scarf and the hood of your degree. Save a stole for the administration of sacraments. Never wear any headgear in church; for outdoor processions and services never use a biretta (why should an American wear an Italian college cap?) but put on an American mortar-board cap or the English (Canterbury) square cap.

2. When you officiate at Morning and Evening Prayer, stand from the Creed until after the third Collect. At the Holy Communion (or at any other time) never genuflect, but use a low bow, preferably not at the "Words of Institution" but after the Invocation when (according to ancient theology and our Anglican divines) the Consecration is completed.

3. Arrange your Altar in the traditional English fashion with riddell curtains of rich color and (unless you have a really good and fairly low reredos) a dossal of the same color and design. Always (except on Good Friday when the Altar should be bare) keep the Altar covered with a frontal of the color of the season hanging to within an inch or two of the ground. Allow no Gradines or tabernacle (they always detract from the beauty of an Altar: if the Sacrament is to be reserved for the sick, use an Aumbry in the north wall of the chancel or a hanging pyx); either have no re-table or else have one not more than an inch above the Altar to take the

Altar ornaments, a cross (which is not always necessary, and should not be too large lest (as so often) it dwarf the Altar); two vases to be used only when there are flowers to put in them; only two candlesticks. The only authority that can be found for six candlesticks is a special custom of the Papal Court, clearly of no concern whatever for those who use the Book of Common Prayer. Small candles, seven-branched and five-branched candlesticks only clutter up and spoil the rather restrained dignity of an Altar furnished for the Prayer Book services.

4. Instead of purple for Advent and Lent, use the lovely "English Blue." The use of the unbleached linen from Ash Wednesday to Passion Sunday, and then the dull red for Passiontide seems more appropriate than the modern Roman use so commonly followed.

Perhaps you would find of interest the following books:

The Parsons' Handbook by Canon P. Dearmer (Sixth and following editions; the last edition is said to be not nearly so good.)

A Directory of Ceremonial, Alcuin Club Tracts XIII.

A Short Handbook of Public Worship by Canon Dearmer.

These books are published by the Oxford Press.

Of course it is true that very few of us Americans can follow these English books exactly; no doubt it is not altogether desirable that we should do so, since American and English conditions differ: but Americans ought to know about the really great work being done abroad, for that work is one with real scholarship and learning behind it which is making itself increasing felt on every hand.

Hoping that this long letter may be of some use to you.

Faithfull yours,

CHARLES E. HILL.

A PRAYER FOR THE NATION.

Almighty God, uphold, we pray Thee, our nation and her allies in their great effort to establish righteousness; preserve and guide to victory the soldiers, sailors, airmen of our forces; bless the work of all those who minister to them; protect all our citizens and stir them with loyalty to serve the cause of truth and justice: through Thy Son, who with the Holy Spirit liveth and reigneth with Thee, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

A GENERAL PRAYER IN TIME OF WAR.

O God, our refuge and strength, we beseech Thee to guide and protect our nation in the fiery trial of war. Grant us true repentance, and take away the offenses of our people, that with clean hands and pure hearts we may go forward in Thy name. Save us from hatred, cruelty and malice. Endue our leaders with wisdom and courage. Strengthen and protect our defenders by land, by sea, and by air, and suffer no dishonor to stain our arms. Safeguard and multiply the ministries of mercy; succor the wounded, receive the dying, comfort the bereaved. Bless those who labor in field and factory, in office and home, for our country's welfare. Make a speedy end of tyrannies in the earth, and deliver the desolate and oppressed of all nations. Hasten the advent of a righteous peace, and establish Thy Kingdom; through Him who is King of kings and Lord of lords, Thy Son our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

A PRAYER FOR AIRMEN.

Almighty God, who makest the clouds Thy chariot and walkest upon the wings of the wind; have mercy, we beseech Thee, on our Airmen, and when they are amidst the clouds and wonders of the

sky, give unto them the assurance of Thy protection, that they may do their duty with prudence and with fearlessness, confidence that in life or in death the eternal God is their refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

TWO LETTERS FROM THE GUARDIAN OF JAN. 2, 1942

Sir—The introduction of the English Use is hindered by the strange notion, still very widespread, that it is more complicated than the so-called "Western" Use. This is a complete misunderstanding. The English Use is not the medieval Use of Sarum, which was in deed complicated, being the Roman rite with probably Gallican ceremonies. The English Use, on the other hand, is the Prayer-book rite, without addition (except the variations permitted by the 1928 book), and clothed with just so much of the old ceremonial as fits it. Nobody wants to restore the elaborate ceremonies in use at Salisbury Cathedral in the fourteenth century, with a different rite (see the Prayer-book Preface "Of Ceremonies").

On this point I have personal experience. I have been on the staff of two London parishes, St. Mary Magdalene's, Paddington, and St. Paul's, Knightsbridge, where full ceremonial was in regular use, in the former "Western", in the latter English. The latter was incomparably simpler, more practical, and more reasonable. There were no fussy genuflexions and osculations, no meaningless survivals, no adaption to one rite of ceremonies, intended for another, like putting on a suit made for another man. The clergy ought in these days to have more important things to study than intricate ceremonial, especially when, like the ceremonies of the Roman Missal, it has really nothing to do with them.

C. B. MOSS,
Appleton Manor, near Abingdon, Berks.

Sir—Like others of your correspondents, I should like to thank you for the articles on the English Use. They bring out points often misunderstood.

The author rightly says that Percy Dearmer invented nothing. He collected and practised what scholars like St. John Hope, Wickham, Legg, Frere, Brightman, and F. C. Eeles had brough to light, His personal contribution in the earlier editions of the "Parson's Handbook" was to fuse these discoveries into a consistent whole with the instinct of an artist, aided by a strong dose of common sense. He saw that the essential Catholic principle where liturgy is concerned is authority. His main point was to discover what the Church of England ordered, and what it implied. "The English Use is set forth in the Book of Common Prayer."

The essential element in liturgy is the rite itself. There ceremonial used with it is partly definitely indicated in the rubrics, partly a matter of tradition. Tradition must always be subject to the test of congruity with the rite. Acting on these lines, Dearmer was able to claim: "I have only tried to show what it is that our Church requires." A new unity could be achieved if this principle were generally adopted. Then there might be free discussion—and practice—in detail, of which the Alcuin Club publications provide examples. There is room for simple as well as for more elaborate ceremonial.

I agree with Mr. Allan Campbell that Anglican Use would be a better term, and most warmly with his condemnation of excessive kneeling. Why should the people not stand at the "Sursum Corda" and the "Gloria in Excelsis" at "all" celebrations? It would be interesting to have examples of "the English enthusiasm for meaningless and non-utilitarian ceremonies."

A. S. DUNCAN-JONES,
The Deanery, Chichester.